



NOTICE OF PREPARATION

GAVIOTA STATE PARK

California Coastal Trail – Gaviota Segment

Draft Environmental Impact Report

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is the Lead Agency under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is preparing a draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed California Coastal Trail – Gaviota Segment Project at Gaviota State Park. We are seeking the views of responsible agencies and interested parties as to the scope and content of the DEIR. The project description, location, and potential environmental effects are included with this notice.

Written comments on the scope of the Environmental Impact Report will be accepted at the address below. Public agencies and private organizations are asked to provide the name, phone number and e-mail address of a specific contact person. Responses to this notice must be postmarked no later than October 6, 2004. Notices and draft environmental documents for public review will be available in electronic form on the DPR website at: http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=983 as they are developed. Printed copies will also be made available to the public at the Santa Barbara Public Library, the Goleta Library, Gaviota State Park, Channel Coast District Office in Ventura, and the Northern Service Center in Sacramento, on request. If you have any questions, please contact:

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) proposes to construct a 4 km (2.5 mile) segment of the California Coastal Trail, in Gaviota State Park. This multi-use trail segment would extend east from the Gaviota State Park entrance road (Gaviota Beach Road) along the coastal terrace on the south side of US Highway (Hwy) 101, and will terminate at Cañada de San Onofre at its eastern end. The trail would serve pedestrians with varied mobility impairments, bicyclists and equestrians. The trail route would include some areas within California Department of Transportation right-of-way for Hwy 101 as well as property currently owned by Shell Oil Company. The proposed project area is located in Santa Barbara County.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The DEIR will evaluate the proposed project and a reasonable range of alternatives, with a detailed description of each. The alternatives may vary in their ability to meet project objectives and by potential impacts on sensitive environmental resources. The DEIR will identify potentially significant impacts on special status plant and animal species or their habitats, archaeological and historical resources, wetlands, land use, visual resources, water quality and floodplain, mineral resources, air quality, recreational resources, and other potential environmental effects that could occur directly or indirectly with implementation of the proposed project or its alternatives. For all potentially significant adverse impacts, the EIR will identify avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures where feasible to reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

Project design, permitting and environmental analysis is funded through the Federal Highway Administration's TEA grant program, administered by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). As a federal grant recipient, DPR is conducting additional technical environmental analysis in consultation with Caltrans, to ensure project compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and related federal environmental laws and regulations. The proposed project would also require permits from agencies with jurisdiction in the project area including, but not limited to the County of Santa Barbara, the California Coastal Commission, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The primary purpose of the scoping process is to identify, rather than to debate, significant issues related to the proposed action. We invite written comments from interested parties to ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed trail construction project are identified. The Draft Environmental Impact Report will be circulated for public and agency review for a period of 45 days. DPR expects to begin this circulation in November 2004. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the official administrative record and may be made available to the public.